

# **NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

## **PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT**

### **Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan**

#### **City of Fairfield**

**Project Title: Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan**

**Project Applicant: City of Fairfield**

In accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), the City of Fairfield has determined that the Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan will require preparation of an Environmental Impact Report ("EIR"). The City of Fairfield will be the lead agency for preparation of the EIR.

#### **Project Location**

The Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan (the Project) is located in the northeastern portion of the City of Fairfield's planning area. The plan area is located west of North Gate Road, south of the City of Vacaville's city limits and north of Travis Air Force Base. The Specific Plan area contains approximately 2,970 acres.

The location of the Specific Plan area is shown in Exhibit 1 (Regional Location) and Exhibit 2 (Specific Plan Boundary).

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan ("Specific Plan") proposes the development of a transit-oriented community. The proposed Land Plan is shown in Exhibit 3. As shown by the Land Plan, a variety of lands uses are proposed including residential, industrial, commercial, parks, schools, public facilities, and open space uses. The Specific Plan would designate nearly 60% of the Specific Plan area as open space.

The focal point of the Specific Plan is the train station, located at the intersection of Peabody and Vanden Road. The train station has already been approved. Permitting and construction planning have commenced. The station is part of the Capitol Corridor system and is scheduled for operation in 2014. Up to 3,000 dwelling units would be located within a one-half mile radius of the station.

Although the train station itself is not a part of this Project, the EIR will consider relationships between the station and uses included as a part of the Specific Plan.

A non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) has been approved by the City with Canon Station LLC and Andrews Lando and Associates (“Canon Station”). Canon Station owns or has a controlling interest in approximately 1,570 acres within the Specific Plan. That MOU has been used to define the Project Description and will be used in the preparation of a draft Development Agreement that will be subsequently considered by the City Council.

## **Land Uses**

The amount and type of development and open space preservation proposed by the Project includes the following:

Residential. The plan proposes development of up to 6,800 dwelling units on 485 residential acres. The residential development would consist of a broad range of housing types, including single-family detached, townhouse, condominiums and apartments.

Industrial. The plan proposes up to 300 acres of industrial development. The industrial area would be divided into two zone districts: Limited Industrial and General Industrial. These zone districts allow various warehouse, manufacturing, research and development, and administrative office uses. These districts would accommodate up to 5,165,600 square feet of building area for industrial and administrative office uses. Portions of the industrial area would be rail-served.

Commercial. The plan proposes up to 30 acres of commercial development, including retail and office uses. Portions of this development would be mixed use. The area designated for commercial development would accommodate up to 345,000 square feet building area for retail and office uses.

Public and Quasi-public. The plan proposes the development of a variety of public and quasi-public facilities. These uses include:

- Elementary school on 10 acres
- Public buildings consisting of a library and community center
- Quasi-public facilities consisting of day care centers and private recreational clubs
- Fire Station and Fire Training Center

Public Parks. The plan proposes development of 176 acres of public park land, with a variety of facilities to serve the Specific Plan area and the city as a whole. Park uses include:

- “Great Park” on a minimum 50-acre site, with recreation activities, including soccer and baseball fields, skate park, trails, picnic areas, and lake (See Exhibit 4)
- “Lake Park” on a minimum 25-acre site, with a 12-acre lake and 13 acres of park land surrounding the water feature (See Exhibit 5)
- Linear Park on 61 acres, which includes a multi-use trail and landscaping
- Paseos and smaller public park areas within residential areas

Open Space. The Specific Plan proposes to designate 1,537 acres as open space. Open space uses include agriculture, habitat conservation, mitigation banks, detention basins, and public open space uses.

In order to mitigate the biological impacts of developing its portion of the Specific Plan, Canon Station has placed or will place conservation easements on 810 acres within the Specific Plan area to preserve land for habitat conservation. In addition, Canon Station has agreed to place conservation easements on approximately 1,650 acres outside of the Specific Plan boundary. Exhibit 6 shows the location of lands proposed for mitigation by Canon Station.

## **Infrastructure**

Infrastructure that will be constructed as part of the Specific Plan includes:

Streets. Key road improvements proposed by the Project include:

- widening of Peabody Road to 6 lanes, from Air Base Parkway to Vanden Road
- widening of Peabody Road to 4 lanes, from Vanden Road to the Vacaville city limits
- widening of Vanden Road to 4 lanes, from Peabody Road to Leisure Town Road
- widening of Cement Hill Road to 6 lanes from Peabody Road to Clay Bank Road
- construction of a new arterial street from Peabody Road to North Gate Road; this includes a new bridge over Putah South Canal and a new grade-separated crossing of railroad; the number of travel lanes will vary between 2 to 4 lanes depending on location
- Construction of the extension of Joseph Gerevas Drive from its existing terminus southwesterly to Village 3 of Lewis Project; this extension includes 2-lane bridge over creek

Some of the road improvements are obligations of other projects or may be funded by city or regional fees.

Portions of Canon Road and North Gate Road may be abandoned to the extent that they are replaced by new streets constructed by the Project.

Multi-use Trail Improvements. The City's Linear Park, a multi-use trail system, will be extended from Peabody Road, through the Specific Plan area to Vacaville city limits. An additional multi-use trail will be extended from the Linear Park to Center School, including a pedestrian overcrossing of Vanden Road and Union Pacific railroad, along an abandoned railroad right-of-way.

Water. Water lines will be constructed within Specific Plan area, in accordance with City standards. One or more pump stations will be constructed as part of the system. In order to comply with provisions of the NPDES permit issued to City by Regional Water Quality Control Board on October 14, 2009, the Specific Plan will construct a basin for beneficial re-use of storm water for landscape irrigation.

Sewer. Sewer lines will be constructed within the Specific Plan area, in accordance with City standards or Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District standards, as appropriate. One or more lift stations will be constructed as part of the system.

Drainage. Drainage will be directed to McCoy Creek and Union Creek. A series of storm water detention basins will be constructed such that the post-development peak flows are 90% of the pre-development peak flows in a 100-year event.

Rail Spurs. One or more spur lines from Union Pacific Railroad will be constructed to serve future industrial development east of Vanden Road.

The EIR will analyze the environmental impacts of constructing the infrastructure identified above. Certain of this infrastructure may prove to be unnecessary. The EIR will provide the analysis, however, so that the impacts have been disclosed in the event constructing the infrastructure is determined to be necessary.

## **Permits and other Approvals**

The permits and other approvals to be issued by the City of Fairfield and by other public agencies for the Project include:

### City of Fairfield

- Approval of various amendments to the General Plan to ensure consistency between the General Plan and Specific Plan
- Adoption of the Train Station Specific Plan and approval of the Specific Plan as the applicable zoning for the area

- Potentially, approval of a Development Agreement between the City and Canon Station LLC and approval of other development agreements with other property owners within Specific Plan boundary
- Approval of parcel, tentative, and final maps for portions of Specific Plan designated for development
- Approval of grading permits, including provisions to allow export of soils from the Specific Plan area
- Approval of design review for buildings and site improvements, consistent with the Specific Plan
- Approval of the conveyance of approximately 98 acres of surplus lands owned by City of Fairfield to Canon Station LLC, in exchange for a 204-acre property and other financial considerations
- Approval of conservation easements for areas designated as open space by Specific Plan

#### Fairfield Redevelopment Agency

- Approval of a redevelopment project area by the Fairfield Redevelopment Agency, for up to 200 acres of largely developed property located along Peabody Road, Vanden Road and Cement Hill Road, within the Specific Plan boundary

#### Solano Irrigation District

- Approval to relocate SID canal located in the north industrial area
- Approval to use raw water from SID for landscape irrigation and operation of Project lake(s)

#### Solano Local Agency Formation Commission

- Amendment of City Sphere of Influence to delete open space designation for certain lands designated for development by Specific Plan
- Annex to City of Fairfield that portion of Specific Plan area within its Sphere of Influence
- De-annexation from Solano Irrigation District that portion of the Specific Plan area designated for residential development

#### Solano Transportation Authority

Modification of its design for Jepson Parkway (Vanden Road) through Specific Plan area

- Provide for a grade-separated overcrossing of railroad near the intersection of Vanden Road and “New Canon Road”
- Change the design standard in Jepson Parkway Concept Plan to “urban/residential parkway” for that portion between the Walters Road extension and Leisure Town Road that abuts urban development

#### Vacaville-Fairfield-Solano Greenbelt Authority

- Amendment of Greenbelt boundary to: (1) remove areas designated for development by Specific Plan, and (2) add areas to Greenbelt such that there is a net increase in the area of the Greenbelt

#### Solano Water Authority

- Modification or termination of the proposed Noonan Reservoir, consistent with the Train Station Specific Plan

#### Solano Airport Land Use Commission

- Approval of a finding of consistency with the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan

#### Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District

- Construction of sewer trunk lines in excess of 10-inch diameter, within Specific Plan area and construction of a 21-inch sewer trunk line in Peabody Road from Vanden Road to Huntington Drive intersection.

#### California Public Utilities Commission

- Approval of a railroad overcrossing for a new arterial street, to replace an existing at-grade crossing for Canon Road
- Approval of one or more rail spur lines to serve the proposed industrial area
- Approval of a railroad overcrossing for a pedestrian/bicycle bridge

#### California Department of Water Resources

- Approval for road and utility crossings of the North Bay Aqueduct easement held by DWR

#### Other State Agencies

- Approval of permits by state agencies such as Department of Fish and Game, State Water Resources Control Board, and Bay Area Air Quality Management District

#### Federal Agencies

Approval of permits by federal agencies including the following

- Incident take permit for endangered species from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,

- 404 Permit for fill of wetlands from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Approval of bridge structure over Putah South Canal by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

The Fairfield City Council has adopted the following Guiding Principles, to assist in preparation of the Specific Plan. A portion of the Specific Plan area has been designated as a Priority Development Area by the Association of Bay Area Governments (“ABAG”). The City’s Guiding Principles for the Specific Plan are consistent with ABAG’s planning goals. These Guiding Principles also serve as the Project Objectives for the Specific Plan.

### **Guiding Principles**

#### **1. Transit Oriented Development**

The Project shall be a transit-oriented community. Its design shall create a strong sense of place that is unique and comparable to the best “greenfield” communities in the United States.

#### **2. Train Station**

The land use and circulation plans will be designed to support and enhance use of the planned train station. The density and intensity of development shall be greater in close proximity to the station.

#### **3. Land Use**

The land plan will take advantage of the Project area and location in providing a mix of land uses, including a broad range of housing types and densities, public, commercial, office and industrial uses.

#### **4. Circulation**

Circulation system shall include vehicular, transit, pedestrian and bicycle components, including extension of the Linear Park.

#### **5. Travis Air Force Base**

Development shall be compatible with the continued operations of Travis AFB and shall protect its viability to accommodate future expansions and changes in mission.

#### **6. Municipal Services**

A Community Facilities District will be established so that new development will pay all costs associated with increased demand for municipal services within the Specific Plan area. This municipal service demand includes public safety (police protection and fire protection), park maintenance, street maintenance, and recreational programs. This may include staffing for a new fire station, if needed.

## **7. Municipal Improvements and Facilities**

New development will be required to provide all municipal facilities and improvements needed to achieve and maintain adequate levels of service. Types of improvements include road, water and sewer infrastructure, drainage improvements, parks, and may include a new fire station. New development will pay for these improvements through a combination of impact fees, exactions and area-wide financing district(s).

## **8. Public Amenities**

Public amenities will be included which benefit the planned community, as well as the city as a whole. Examples of such amenities include but are not limited to community park, community/youth center(s), lake(s) and a library.

## **9. Economic Development**

The Project shall provide opportunities for new jobs with industrial development east of the railroad and retail and office employment west of the railroad.

## **10. Sustainable Development**

Sustainability will be promoted through such design features as compact development, mixed land uses, higher densities, transit and non-motor transportation modes, energy conservation and water conservation.

## **11. Redevelopment**

The Project will facilitate the redevelopment of existing industrial uses along Peabody Road to residential, commercial and mixed-use development. The proposed industrial land east of the railroad will be designed to provide opportunities for possible relocation of existing industrial uses.

## **12. Open Space**

A robust open space system will be established to preserve key habitat areas and to provide public access and public recreational amenities in the portion of the Greenbelt within the Specific Plan area.

## **13. Inter-agency Coordination and Cooperation**

The City commits to work in coordination and cooperation with other public agencies to balance project objectives with those of other agencies. These agencies include Travis Air Force Base, Solano Transportation Authority, Solano Water Authority, Solano County, Local Agency Formation Commission, City of Vacaville, Solano Irrigation District, and Travis Unified School District.



## **TYPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

The EIR will be a project EIR, as described in Section 15161 of the CEQA Guidelines. Use of the EIR for future approvals will be in accordance with CEQA Guidelines sections 15182 and 15183.

## **POTENTIAL AREAS OF CONCERN**

All CEQA environmental topic areas set forth in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines will be addressed in the EIR. Based on preliminary studies conducted by City, the following issue areas may be of particular importance. The level and scope of environmental assessment in the EIR will be refined, based on responses to this NOP.

### **Aesthetics**

The EIR will evaluate the change in visual character of the area resulting from the proposed Project. The majority of the Specific Plan area is used for cattle grazing. The visual character of the area will be changed through development of the transit-oriented community. Much of the low, rolling hills will be graded to create appropriate building pads. Up to 5 million cubic yards of earth may be moved through development. The EIR will assess the visual impacts to the Vacaville-Fairfield-Solano Greenbelt, which is intended to visually separate and define the communities of Fairfield and Vacaville. Potential impacts of light and glare on adjacent residential uses will be evaluated.

### **Agriculture**

The change in use from cattle grazing to urban and suburban uses for portions of the Specific Plan will be analyzed in the context of applicable City and County policies and the CEQA standards of significance for agricultural resources. The evaluation will include any direct or indirect impacts on adjacent agricultural areas.

### **Air Quality**

The EIR will describe regional and local air quality in the Specific Plan area and evaluate potentially significant direct, indirect, and cumulative air quality effects of the Project during construction (temporary and short-term) and operation (long term). Analysis and characterization of the Specific Plan's impacts will be informed by CEQA guidance and thresholds of significance developed by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District ("BAAQMD").

## **Biological Resources**

The Specific Plan area contains a variety of rare, threatened and endangered species, based on the draft Solano Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan ("HCP") and related studies. The EIR will describe the proposed Project's effect on existing biological resources and the Project's direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on these biological resources. The EIR will evaluate the Project's consistency with the draft HCP.

As identified in the draft HCP, species of concern with known or potential habitat in the Specific Plan area include:

- California tiger salamander
- Contra costa goldfield
- Swainson's hawk

The Specific Plan area contains vernal pools and seasonal wetlands. Some of these have been subject to delineation by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The Canon Station has proposed to preserve approximately 2,457 acres of land within and adjacent to the Specific Plan area as mitigation for loss of habitat through development of its property. The suitability of that mitigation area will be evaluated in the EIR.

## **Climate Change**

Emissions of greenhouse gases contributing to global climate change are attributable in large part to human activities. In California, the transportation sector is the largest emitter, but greenhouse gas emissions can be broadly attributed to various human activities associated with the residential, industrial/manufacturing, utility, transportation, and agricultural sectors. A quantitative analysis of the Project's greenhouse gas emissions will be prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 and methodology recommended in draft guidance issued by BAAQMD.

## **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

The EIR will discuss the potential for hazardous material exposure either during construction or during long-term occupation of development. Potential hazards that will be evaluated include:

- Potential contamination of soils that occurred during existing or prior industrial or commercial service uses of developed sites along Peabody, Vanden and Cement Hill roads

- Hazards associated with operation of Union Pacific Railroad facility, including the risk of derailment
- Hazards associated with leak or rupture of the fuel line located within or adjacent to the Vanden Road right-of-way
- Hazards associated with the failure of the embankment for the proposed Noonan Reservoir due to seismic activity

## **Hydrology and Water Quality**

The EIR will evaluate the Project's effect on hydrology and water quality. This evaluation will include: Project's consistency with the requirements of the NPDES Stormwater Permit, issued by the RWQCB; alteration of drainage patterns; erosion; stormwater discharges; and flooding.

## **Land Use and Planning**

The EIR will evaluate the consistency of the proposed Specific Plan with applicable policies adopted to reduce environmental effects in the City of Fairfield General Plan, Solano County General Plan, Vacaville-Fairfield-Solano Greenbelt, draft Solano Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan and Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan.

## **Noise**

The EIR evaluate the short-term noise impacts that will occur during construction of site improvements and buildings, as well as long-term operational noise impacts caused by traffic and industrial uses. The impacts will be compared to the City's adopted policies in its General Plan. In addition, the analysis will address the land use compatibility of the Project with existing and future noise levels, including noise generated by operation of the Union Pacific Railroad and operation of Travis Air Force Base.

## **Public Services, Including Recreation**

Development within the Specific Plan area will increase the demand for City's municipal services, including fire, police, parks and recreation. In addition, residential development will also increase the demand for additional school facilities by the Travis Unified School District. The EIR will include a description of the existing levels of service and an analysis of the potential impacts related to demand for new public services and facilities. The analysis will specifically consider the availability of City fire protection services for the Specific Plan area.

## **Traffic and Circulation**

The EIR will evaluate the Project's direct and cumulative impacts on local and regional roads. The transportation analysis will evaluate Level of Service for affected intersections and roadway links within Specific Plan and the surrounding roadway network. As part of the analysis, the EIR will identify specific triggers when certain road or transportation improvements must be completed. Due to the transit-oriented character of the Project, the analysis factors the availability of transit and multi-use trails, as well as the proximity to employment and local services.

## **Alternatives**

The EIR will identify and evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives that will meet most of the City's basic objectives for the Project, while attempting to avoid or substantially lessen some or all of the Project's significant environmental effects. The EIR will analyze the "no project" alternative.

## **Utilities**

The EIR will evaluate the need for additional wet (water and sewer) and dry (electrical, natural gas, and communication) utilities, based on estimated demand by the Project. The City will prepare an SB-610 Water Supply Assessment (WSA) to address the sufficiency of future water supplies.

## **PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS**

The purpose of the Notice of Preparation is to provide an opportunity for public agencies, interested parties and the public to comment on the scope and content of the EIR.

The City welcomes input. In particular, the City encourages responsible agencies to provide information relevant to the analysis of resources falling within the jurisdiction of such agencies. Information regarding applicable regulatory guidance or standards, or appropriate mitigation measures, would be useful. Input regarding alternatives that should be considered would also be useful. The City wishes to ensure that the EIR is adequate for purposes of the permits or approvals to be issued by responsible agencies.

This notice provides information describing the project and its potential environmental effects to enable responsible agencies and other interested persons and organizations to provide input regarding the scope and content of the EIR. If you believe that additional information would assist you in providing

such input, please contact the City of Fairfield; contact information is provided below.

Comments in response to the Notice of Preparation should be submitted to the City no later than June 10, 2010. To facilitate this process, the City of Fairfield will conduct a public scoping meeting on June 9, 2010 at 7:00 pm in the City Council Chamber located at 1000 Webster Street, Fairfield, California. Written or oral comments may be made at the scoping meeting.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

All comments or questions should be directed to:

Mr. David Feinstein, Senior Planner  
Department of Community Development  
City of Fairfield  
1000 Webster Street  
Fairfield, CA 94533-4883  
(707) 428-7448

# EXHIBITS

Exhibit	Title
1	Regional Location
2	Specific Plan Boundary
3	Land Plan
4	Great Park Illustrative Plan
5	Lake Park Illustrative Plan
6	Mitigation Lands

Exhibit 1  
Regional Location

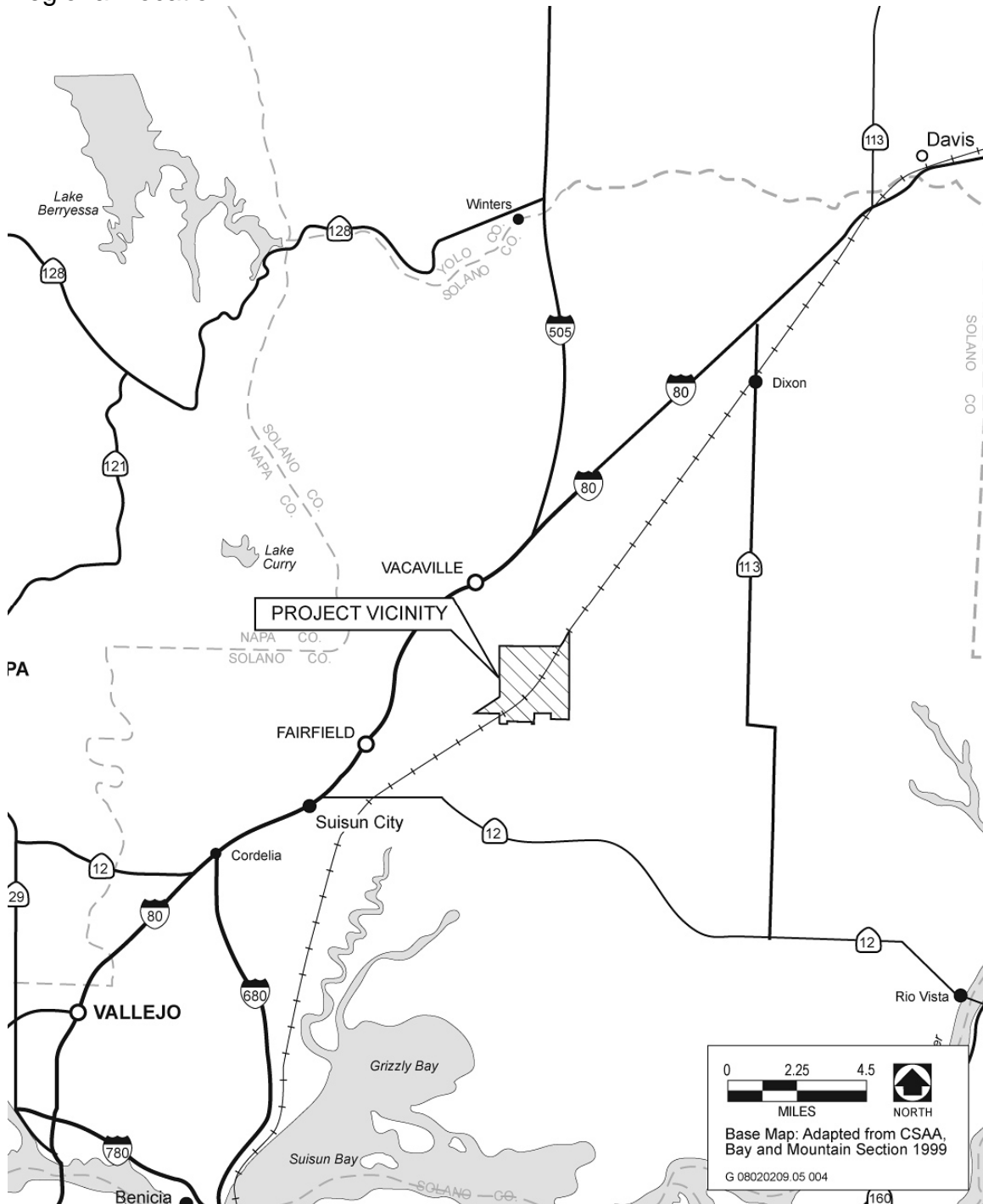




Exhibit 2  
Specific Plan Boundary

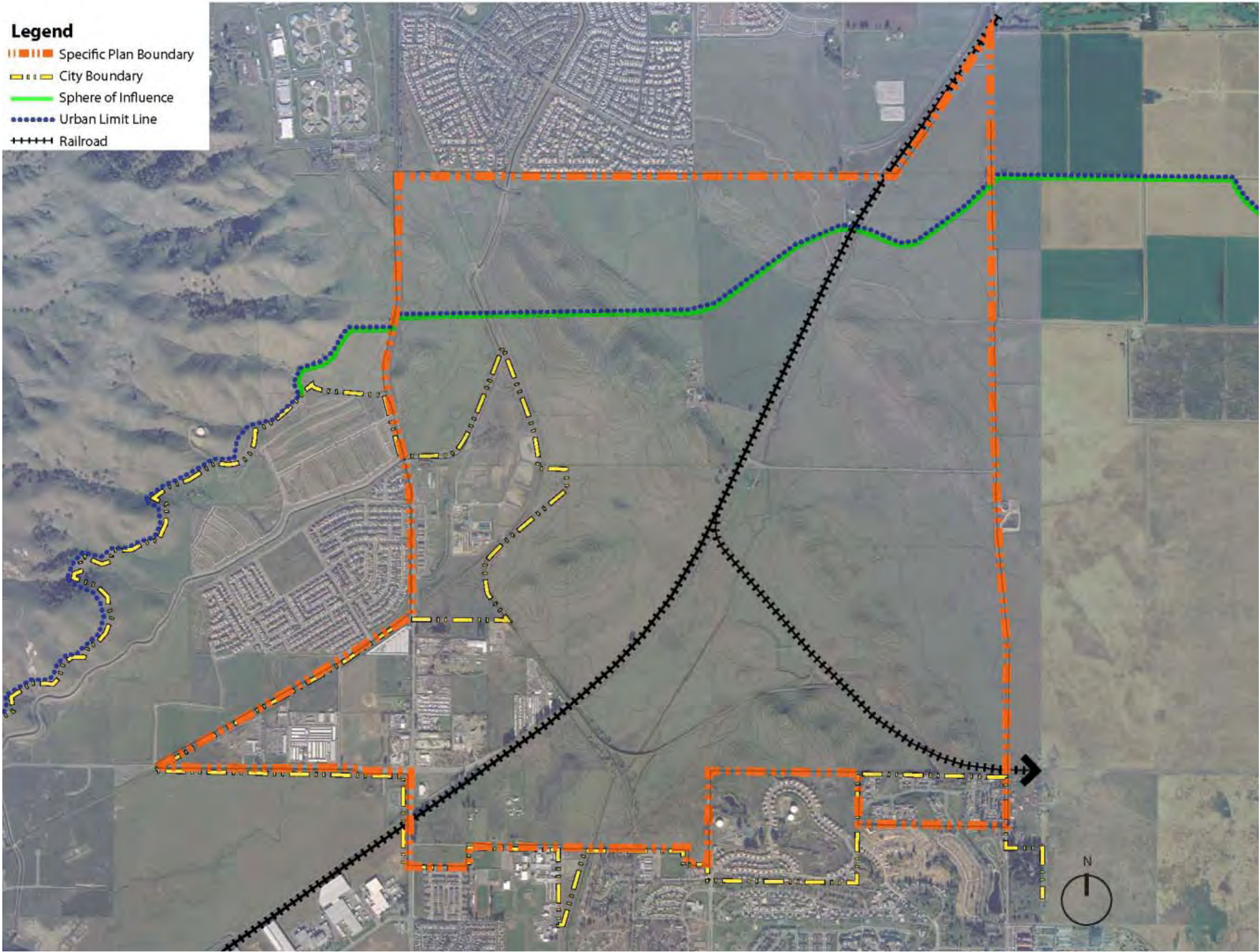




Exhibit 3  
Land Plan

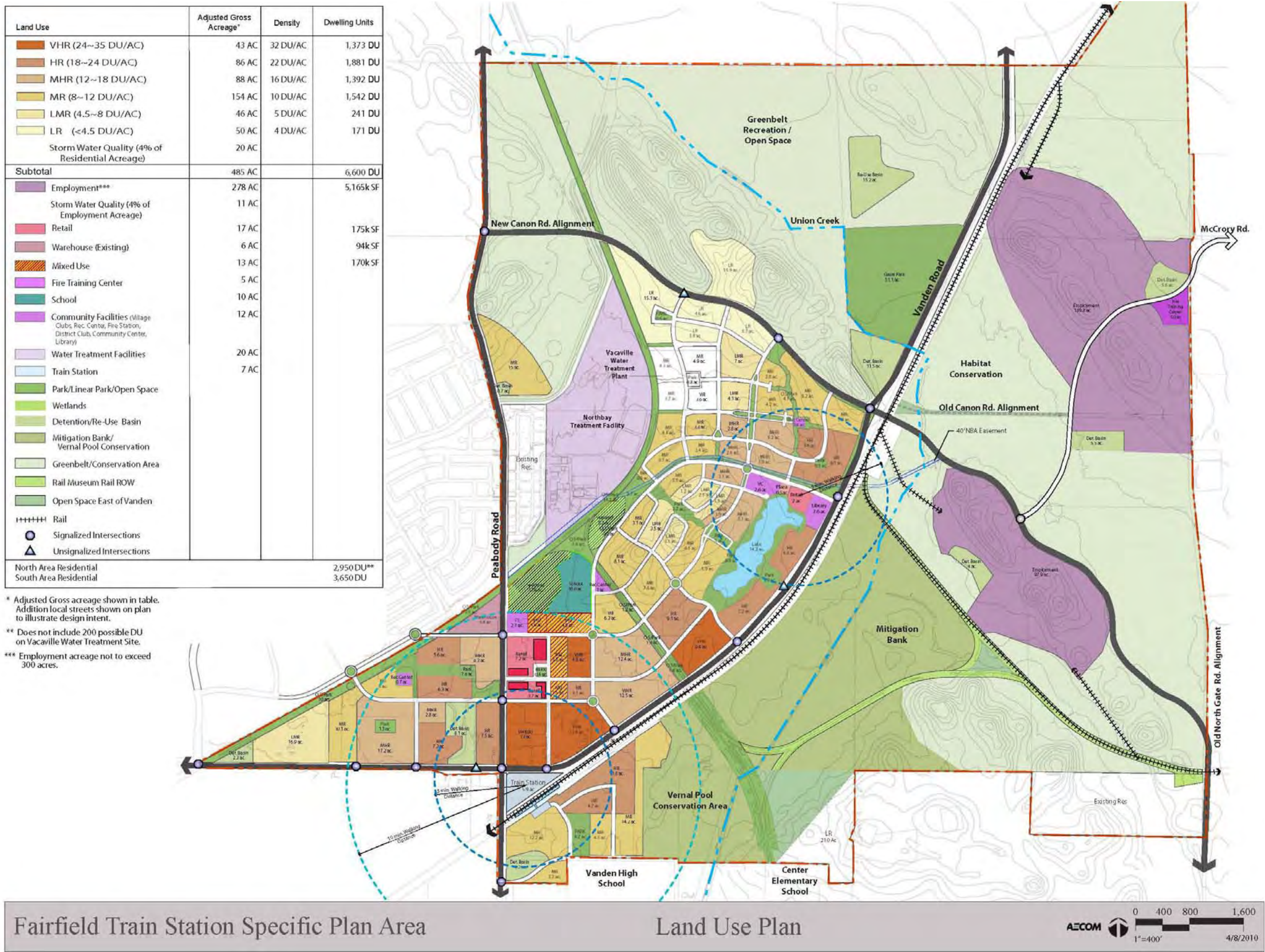




Exhibit 4  
Great Park Illustrative Plan

“Great Park - Guiding Principles”

- 1. Orderly section lines reflecting agrarian organization.
- 2. Access park activities by the use of a tree lined promenade.
- 3. Provide opportunities to learn about wetland environments with the introduction of an agricultural lake and the Union Creek restoration.
- 4. Connections with “Airplane Hill” and nearby communities.
- 5. Ease of park access along Vanden road for the neighboring communities with the parking orchards.
- 6. Integrate a network of measured soft surface walking/jogging trails.



GREAT PARK - 50 Acres







Exhibit 6  
Mitigation Lands

